

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)
NEW VETERINARY CLINIC
ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE, SOUTH DAKOTA**

The attached environmental assessment (EA) analyzes the potential for impacts to the environment as a result of the construction and operation of a new veterinary clinic at Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB), South Dakota. A No-Action Alternative was also considered. The EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S. Code [U.S.C.] 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500-1580, and Air Force policy and procedures (32 CFR Part 989).

This FONSI summarizes the results of the evaluation of construction and operation activities. The discussion focuses on activities that have the potential to change both the natural and human environments.

Summary of Environmental Consequences

Socioeconomics, utilities, transportation, airspace, hazardous materials management, hazardous waste management, pesticide management, storage tanks, radon, ordnance, radioactive materials, noise, and biological resources would not be affected.

Because there would be no change in population, and only a temporary increase in employment that would result from the construction of the new facility and no new personnel would be required, significant impacts to socioeconomics are not expected. No change in use of utilities would occur and no impacts are expected. No increase in traffic is expected to occur, except from that of short-term construction crews. No impacts to the use, control, or management of airspace are anticipated as a result of the construction project. Hazardous materials, hazardous waste, and pesticide management practices are not expected to change as a result of the construction project or implementation of the Proposed Action. There are no structures or facilities within the project area that contain storage tanks, ordnance, or radioactive materials; therefore, impacts are not expected. The project does not include any type of facility for which radon would be a concern. Noise generated from construction activities is expected to be temporary; no permanent or long-term impacts for noise are expected. The project area is within a developed portion of the base, and the immediate area is disturbed; therefore, significant impacts to biological resources are not expected.

Because the new veterinary clinic would not change the visual character or sensitivity of the site, no impacts to aesthetics are expected. The project would be consistent with the proposed land use designation for the project site in the base general plan. Long-term adverse impacts are not expected.

The construction of the new facility would not change the manner in which medical/biohazardous materials are generated, stored, distributed, or disposed of. Construction of the new facility would not increase the relative amount of medical/biohazardous materials stored on base because the facility would be replacing the existing veterinary clinic. After the Proposed Action is implemented, medical/biohazardous waste generation would move from the existing facility to the new veterinary clinic. No significant impacts from generation, storage, or disposal of medical/biohazardous waste are anticipated.

Construction activities do not involve large-scale cutting, filling, or grading of the area, so geology and soils are not expected to be significantly altered. Standard construction practices would be implemented to control potential soil erosion and water runoff. No surface water resources are near the project area and construction is not expected to have a significant impact on surface or groundwater resources.

During construction, the potential exists for short-term impacts to local air quality from fugitive dust or emissions from construction vehicles. However, standard management practices would be used to control fugitive dust, and emissions from construction activities would be temporary. Impacts to air quality are expected to be temporary and less than significant.

The project area has been heavily disturbed; no historic properties are expected to be encountered during project activities. No significant impacts to cultural resources are expected.

Cumulative Impacts

The EA reviewed cumulative impacts that could result from the incremental impact of proposed activities when added to other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions. No significant cumulative impacts would be expected.

Mitigations

The EA concluded that no significant impacts to the environment would result from the construction and operation of the new veterinary clinic. Therefore, no mitigation measures would be required.

Decision

As a result of the analysis of impacts in the EA, it was concluded that the proposed activity would not have a significant effect on human health or the natural environment; therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.



MARK E. WEATHERINGTON, Colonel, USAF
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19 MAR 13
Date

Attachment:
Environmental Assessment